

Message Text

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ACTION SS-15

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R 131542Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY OSLO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5425
SECDEF WASHDC

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DOD/DIA-FOR LTGEN TIGHE

DOD/ISA- FOR ASSISTANT SEC MCGIFFORT

FOR M - JOAN CLARK

FROM AMBASSADOR LERNER

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: MODE, NO
SUBJ: MODE: REDUCTION OF DAO STAFF

REF: (A) USAF 082010Z MAR 1978 (B) BUPERS ORDER 056380
FEB 16, 1978 (C) OSLO 5299

1. SINCE MY ARRIVAL AS AMBASSADOR IN OSLO, I HAVE MADE A
SUSTAINED EFFORT, CONSISTENT WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S INSTRUCTIONS
TO ME, TO REDUCE THE LEVEL OF US OFFICIAL REPRESENTATION IN
NORWAY TO THE MINIMUM CONSISTENT WITH OUR INTERESTS HERE.
I HAVE CONDUCTED A THOROUGH-GOING REVIEW OF ALL ELEMENTS OF
MY MISSIONS STAFFING, AND RECOMMENDED A NUMBER OF REDUCTIONS

IN EACH PART OF THE MISSION. SOME OF THESE REDUCTION HAVE
ALREADY BEEN CARRIED OUT AND OTHERS ARE STILL PLANNED.
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2. ONE OF THE DISAPPOINTMENTS WHICH I HAVE EXPERIENCED IN THIS
PROCESS HAS BEEN LACK OF SUCCESS TO DATE IN ACHIEVING DIA
AGREEMENT TO REDUCTIONS I HAVE PROPOSED IN THE DAO STAFFING
PATTERN. AFTER AN EXTENSIVE REVIEW OF THE DAO STAFFING
HERE, I CONCLUDED THAT I COULD NOT JUSTIFY THE CONTINUATION OF
TWO AMERICAN POSITIONS HERE (THE ASSISTANT NAVAL ATTACHE

AND THE ASSISTANT AIR ATTACHE) AND ONE FOREIGN SERVICE LOCAL POSITION. I THEREFORE RECOMMENDED THAT THESE POSITIONS BE ABOLISHED AND IN THE CASE OF THE AMERICAN BILLETS, SPECIFICALLY TIED THE ABOLITION OF THE POSITIONS TO THE PENDING TRANSFER THIS SUMMER OF MY ASSISTANT NAVAL ATTACHE AND MY AIR ATTACHE (CAPT CLAY AND COL BURRIS RESPECTIVELY). THIS, I REASONED, WOULD MINIMIZE THE HARDSHIPS ON THE SERVICES AND PERSONNEL INVOLVED.

3. DESPITE THE FACT THAT THESE RECOMMENDATIONS WERE MADE TO WASHINGTON MORE THAN FIVE MONTHS AGO, I FIND THAT BOTH THE AIR FORCE AND NAVAL PERSONNEL SYSTEMS CONTINUE TO ASSUME THAT BOTH CAPTAIN CLAY AND COL BURRIS WILL BE REPLACED ROUTINELY THIS SUMMER. THIS LAST WEEK I RECEIVED NOTICE THAT THE AIR FORCE HAS ASSIGNED COL DANIEL BAUMGARTNER TO REPLACE BURRIS (REF A). MOREOVER, THE BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL ISSUED ORDERS FEBRUARY 16TH ASSIGNING LTCDR DONALD ESTES TO REPLACE CLAY (REF B).

4. DURING MY DISCUSSIONS WITH STATE AND DOD OFFICIALS ON MARCH 3RD IN WASHINGTON, I REITERATED MY POSITION THAT I CAN SEE NO JUSTIFICATION FOR EITHER OF THESE REPLACEMENTS COMING TO OSLO. IN MY VIEW THE SIMPLEST WAY TO ACCOMPLISH THE REDUCTION OF AIR FORCE PERSONNEL IS TO MAKE OUR CURRENT ASSISTANT AIR ATTACHE (MAJOR SETLOW) THE AIR ATTACHE UPON COL BURRIS' DEPARTURE THIS SUMMER. THIS IS NO REFLECTION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ON COL BAUMGARTNER, WHO HAS IMPRESSIVE QUALIFICATIONS. AS AN ALTERNATIVE, I WOULD BE PLEASED TO HAVE BAUMGARTNER COME THIS SUMMER AS A REPLACEMENT FOR BOTH BURRIS AND SETLOW. IN ANY EVENT, I CANNOT AGREE TO COL BAUMGARTNER'S ASSIGNMENT HERE AS AIR ATTACHE UNTIL THE ISSUE OF THE AIR FORCE STAFFING IN THE DAO IS RESOLVED.

5. IN MY TALKS IN WASHINGTON, I ALSO MADE IT CLEAR THAT I DO NOT INTEND TO ALLOW CAPT CLAY TO BE REPLACED WHEN HE LEAVES THIS SUMMER. I EXPRESSED MY HOPE THAT LTCDR ESTES WOULD BE FOUND AN ALTERNATIVE ASSIGNMENT QUICKLY SO AS TO AVOID ANY FURTHER PERSONAL HARDSHIP ON HIM. I REGRET THE INCONVENIENCE WHICH HAS ALREADY BEEN CAUSED HIM.

6. I HAVE DISCUSSED THESE RECOMMENDATIONS WITH MY DEFENSE ATTACHE AND HAVE REFLECTED HIS VIEWS ON THEM IN PREVIOUS REPORTING (REF C). I UNDERSTAND THAT HE STILL HAS RESERVATIONS ABOUT THEM WHICH HE HAS MADE KNOW TO DIA.

7. IN SUM I BELIEVE WASHINGTON AGENCIES MUST ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF DAO STAFFING HERE IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE SITUATION BECOMES ANYMORE COMPLICATED FOR ALL CONCERNED.

LERNER

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